THE NEW

SPOUTER's COMPANION,

OR A SELECTION OF

PROLOGUES,

AND

EPILOGUES,

As Delivered at the London Theatres.

Dedicated to the School of Garrick.

ILLUSTRATED WITH THE

ART OF ACTING;

AND THE

PICTURE OF A SPOUTING CLUB.

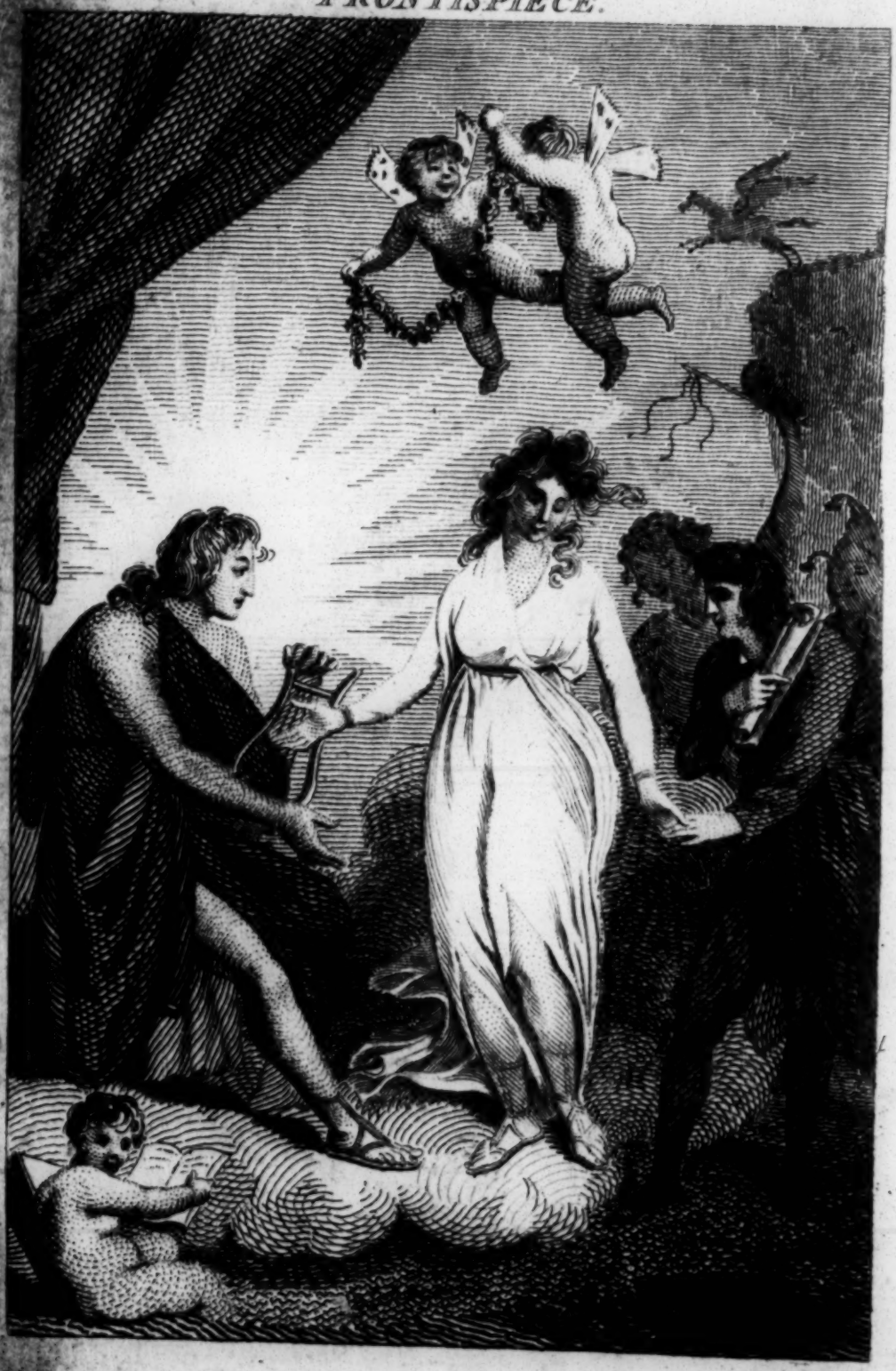
London:

PRINTED FOR R. RUSTED,

SHOE-LANE,

PRICE SIX-PENCE.

FRONTISPIECE.



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EPILOGUE TO A CURE FOR THE HEART-ACHE.

SHAKESPEARE, a ſhrewd old quiz in his dull age,
Said, very gravely, "all the world's a Stage."
But if the Poet to our times could drop,
He'd rather own that all the world's a Shop.
And what's the trade? exclaim the Critic railers;
Why, "men and women all are merely TAILORS."
Nay, frown not, Beaux; and Ladies, do not pout;
You've all your cuttings-in and cuttings-out.
And firſt, MISS HOYDEN, juſt eſcap'd from ſchool,
Slighting Mamma, and all domeſtic rule;
If ſhe, in Faſhion's road, ſhould chance to trip,
What ſays the world? why, Miſs has made a ſlip.
And if, a falling character to ſave,
She weds with age, juſt tottering o'er the grave,
The ſportive world will ſtill enjoy the joke,
And ſpouſe at home, at once is made a cloak.
The Politician next, who, when in place,
Views public meaſures with a ſmiling face,
Croaks, when he's OUT, a diſcontented note;
Sure he's a Tailor—he has turn'd his coat.
Oft have I meaſur'd you, when cloſely ſitting,
To ſee what twiſt, what ſhape, what air, was fitting:
Once more I'll try, if you'll make no reſiſtance;
Mine's a quick eye, and meaſures at a diſtance.
[*Produces the ſheers and meaſures.*
Great MR. ALDERMAN—your Worſhip—Sir,
If you can ſtomach it, you need not ſtir;
Room you require for turtle and for haunch—
'Tis done,—two yards three quarters round the paunch.

Slim Sir, hold up your arm—O you're a Poet,
You want a coat, indeed—your elbows ſhew it.
Don't tremble, man, there's now no cauſe for fears,
Tho' oft you ſhirk us gemmen of the ſheers.
Genius ſtands ſtill, when Tailors interpoſe;
'Tis like a watch—it ticks—and then it goes.
The needle dropt, the warlike ſword I draw,
For e'en our ſex muſt yield to martial law.
Lady DRAWCANSIR came to me laſt night—
" O! my dear Ma'am, I am in ſuch a fright;
" They've drawn me for a man; and, what is worſe,
" I am to ſoldier it, and mount a horſe—
" Muſt wear the breeches," Says I, " Don't deplore
" What in your huſband's life you always wore:
" But that your La'aſhip's heart may ceaſe from throbbing,
" Let your fat coachman mount upon fat dobbin;
" And for the good old pair, I'll boldly ſay,
" Nor man, nor horſe, will ever run away."
" Run—arrah—what is that—don't fear betray,"
Cries patriot PADDY, hot from Bantry Bay.
[*Aſſuming the Brogue.*
" The Frenchmen came, expecting us to meet 'em,
" And ſure we all were ready there to beat 'em
" With piping hot potatoes made of lead,
" And powder that would ſerve inſtead of bread:
" Then for the meat—Oh, ſuch fine legs of frogs,
" With warm dry lodging for them in the bogs!"
" They came, alas," cried I, of terror full,
" They made a conqueſt"—" No, they made a bull"
But ſoftly—what with meaſures, bulls, and battle,
You muſt, I'm ſure, be tir'd of my dull prattle;
But while you look ſo pleaſant, kind, and clever,
Had I the way, I'd talk to you for ever.

EPILOGUE TO THE WAY TO GET MARRIED.

THE dubious title of our Play this night
Might fill Mama with joy, or miſs with fright.
" The Way to get a Huſband," and why not?—
But are they worth the getting when they're got?
" Yes," cries bold miſs,—whom mother's kind regard
Has led, at young fourteen, to cock her card,—
" Yes," cries bold miſs, " whate'er the formals ſay,
They are worth getting, and I know the way.

—The way's up Bond-ſtreet! where we daily range,
Where ſauntering bloods crowd Faſhion's full exchange!
There (charming ſcene!) as undiſmay'd we ſtrut—
Dogs, miſſes, dukes, and draymen, meet full butt!
There, lounging arm in arm, half booted crops,
With heads ſo dark, you'd ſwear they were—black mops:
There, muſlin petticoats with mud ſo lac'd,
Here ſcarlet ſpencers with an inch of waiſt,
So ſcarlet all, my rouge they ſeem to ſcoff,
And look like lobſters with their tails cut off!
Here for a huſband is the ſcene to daſh,
Here for a town-bred miſs to—make a ſplaſh.
The plump, briſk widows take a different road,
She cannot walk down Bond-ſtreet:—ſhe's a load!
Good ſixteen ſtone to carry—but yet ſtrong:
She rolls a wool-pack Venus,—broad as long!
Yet ſhe's a tender paſſion for the ſtage!
With her, dear *private acting* is the rage.
Shakſpeare in her finds beauties—not his choice,
And Juliet grieves in—a fine manly voice,
Her Romeo—a lord, might ſuit your pocket.
Looks like a candle—ſunk into the ſocket.
In tones like theſe their mutual paſſions run:—
Says he, *(a liſping, effeminate voice)*
" It is the eaſt, and Juliet is the ſun!
" To heaven-reſpected lenity, adieu!
" And fire-eyed fury be my conduct now!"
Then ſhe—*(very gruff, hoarſe tone)*
" Good nurſe! I am a child! Tut! do not ſpeak,
" Elſe would a maiden-bluſh bepaint my cheek
" For that which thou haſt heard me ſpeak this night;
" I am an infant-wife, ſcarce wedded quite!"
Accent ſo ſweet, what mortal can withſtand?
The ſtage-ſtruck peer makes tender of his hand.
Juliet exclaims, as not conſenting quite,
" What ſatisfaction can'ſt thou have to-night?"
If " To Get Married," this be *not* the way,
What grace, what charm more potent, can have ſway?
A maiden in the country,—on whoſe cheek,
Pure as the primros'd morn, the bluſhes ſpeak,
Whoſe mind illum'd by Nature's ſimple ray,
Diſdains to rule, and chuſes to obey,

Who, like the Briton, conquers to—increaſe
Domeſtic happineſs, and laſting peace!

EPILOGUE TO WIVES AS THEY WERE.

WELL. female critics, what's the ſentence, ſay—
Can you with kindneſs treat this ſaucy play,
That gives to ancient dames the wreath of praiſe
And boldly cenſures thoſe of modern days?
Bring us good huſbands firſt, and on my life,
For every one we'll ſhew as good a wife.
Whate'er the errors in the nuptial ſtate,
Man ſets the example to his paſſive mate;
While all the virtues the proud ſex can claim
From female influence caught the gen'rous flame.
Nay, though our gallant rulers of the main
With force reſiſtleſs cruſh the pride of Spain
'Tis WOMAN triumphs—that inſpiring charm
With tenfold vigour nerves the hero's arm:
For KING and COUNTRY though they nobly bleed,
The ſmile of BEAUTY is their deareſt meed,
And valient tars ſhould ſtill be Beauty's care
Since 'tis "the brave alone deſerve the fair."

SPOKEN BY MR. MUNDEN AS AN OLD WOMAN.

BE quiet—don't fleer ſo—I'm right I'll be bound,
Good gracious! where am I? I'm down to the ground: *(curtſies.)*
My bluſhes excuſe—to near fainting I'm hurried——
Again I'm your *ſarvant*——*(Curtſies.)* Oh dear how I'm flurried.
Yet leaſt this intruſion may ſtrange-like appear,
If you pleaſe, I ll juſt intimate what brought me here;
'Tis my birth-day—exactly—I'm eighty no more;
Pray a'n't I a good-looking girl of fourſcore?
I hop'd recreation might fall in my way,
A I wiſh'd to be merry—ſo went to the play:
New brooms ſweep ſo clean! and new places ſo pleaſe,
That to get into Drury I ventur'd a ſqueeze,

The ſight was quite charming! the big and the little,
The old, young, rich, poor, ſeggs! it ſuits to a tittle;
They've alter'd their plan tho' and much frighten'd I found,
To ſave us from fire we were all to be drown'd!
Nay, to keep its approach from ſpectators more certain,
A fire eſcape's made of a ſtout iron curtain.
I ſaw while I wept too, my eyes red as ferret's,
No ghoſt—but abundance of ſtrange colour'd ſpirrits,
And a boat row'd acroſs ſeem'd as light as a fly,
I didn't think ſcullermen thereabouts ply,
If I did, and on water went pleaſuring again,
I'd be row'd up the river all thro' Drury-lane.
No wonder, that folks their allurements to follow,
Old Shakeſpear's within. and without young Apollo!
Well before all was over, I bundles below,
Left the neweſt new houſe, to ſee here a new ſhow.
I was told you'd a ſchool that would cauſe ſtrange emotions.
To virgins like me, who have conjugal notions;
That leſſon I've loſt—and regret—yet I've come,
As a Packet Boat paſſenger—pray have you room?
I was ſqueez'd coming in ſo, by wives, maids, and ſpouſes,
That pettiſh I cry'd out, *a Plague on both Houſes.*
Yet ſtill I admire 'em—to pleaſe they're ſo ready,
Here plain as a quaker, *there* gay as a lady,
So anxious to merit your ſmiles, and ſo civil,
To oblige you I'm told, they ſometimes raiſe the devil.
Revive Doctor Fauſtus, to Switzerland roam—
Thank heaven, I find here I'm always at home.
I'd been poz'd through to ſee 'em, and give this relation,
If a youth of a ſoldier had not ta'en compaſſion,
My charms ſurely ſtruck him?—he prais'd my bright eye,
Gain'd my heart! aſk'd my hand—Lord! I could not deny;
So though hopes oft are marr'd, and a long while I've tarried,
After eighty years waiting—I ſoon ſhall get married,
And if it ſo pleaſe you (a thing not uncommon)
To laugh at the tale of a ſimple old woman;
The huſband may patronize, ſmile on the wiſe,
And make this the happieſt hour of my life.

PROLOGUE TO BETTER LATE THAN NEVER.

CUSTOM commands a Prologue to each Play;
But cuſtom has not told us what to ſay:
No form preſcrib'd, 'tis difficult to find,
How to conciliate the Public mind.
The baſhful Bard—the modeſt Muſe's fears,
So long have jingled in your patient ears,
That now, perhaps, you'll ſcarce vouchſafe to ſtay,
To hear both their Apology—and Play.
No! Better ſure on him at once to call,
With—Sir, if frighten'd thus, why write at all?
We're not reduc'd yet to a trembling pen;
Zounds, Bards, will croud us ſoon, like—Gentlemen.
Something like this, I heard a Friend once ſay,
Who wiſh'd (poor ſoul) to hear a new launch'd Play:
Box'd ſnug at firſt, completely to his mind,
With only one grave Auditor behind:
E'er the third act had ſtruggled to its end.
In reel'd three Critics, each the Author's friend—
On praiſe determin'd—Wit confirm'd by wine;
Each and! and If! was chaſte—correct—damn'd fine.
To taſte ſo mark'd, my friend, of courſe, gave way;
But ſqueez'd, thump'd, kick'd—ſtill liſten'd to the play;
Till by repeated plaudits grown ſo ſore,
Nor fleſh nor blood cou'd bear one comment more.
Such boiſt'rous friends they ſurely cannot need,
Who wiſh by merit only to ſucceed.
To night we offer to the public view,
A character, you'll own, perhaps, is new,
From Doctor's Commons we the model draw:
A promiſing Eleve of Civil Law;
And civil ſure that law which can provide,
Or (ſhou'd need be) releaſe you from a Bride.
Thrice bleſs'd the manſion where, in ſpite of ills
Alive or *dead*, you ſtill can have your Wills.
Much cou'd I offer in our Author's cauſe;
Nay, prove his firſt great object—your applauſe;
But, leaſt dull friendſhip ſhou'd his Genius wrong,
I'll ſtop—before the Prologue grows too long,
And *Better late than never* hold my Tongue.

THE

PICTURE

OF A

SPOUTING CLUB.

NOW o'er the day, night rolls her awful clouds—
This interval indulging, to the CLUB
Of SPOUTERS I repair, where mortal forms
Borne high upon the feathers of conceit,
Rise into air; while puffing blasts of wind
Bursting from loosely flying Fancy's cave,
Blow them to regions where Theatra reigns.
The room presents a group of objects rare,
Features distinct and various; while upon
The tables the resplendent pewter pots
Their pure contents and frothy substance boast
Invigorant. Virginia's plant matur'd,
Lies in the centre: with the clay form'd tube
Each member graces his extended hand.
Above the rest, with lordly looks erect,
Deputed sits the REGENT of the night,
In elbow chair pre-eminent. His hand
The silence-knocking hammer yields. Before
His optic balls are placed two shining orbs,
Betwixt whose pewter confines, interspers'd
With glitt'ring pieces of argental coin,
Lie wide spread Halfpence, jingling at the touch;
There great he sits, with glee magnificent,
To keep good order and direct each scene.
But lo! a Roscian now is on the move,
Stentorohphontos; him long I mark'd,
Saw meditation hover o'er his brow,
And all his faculties absorb'd in thought.
Forth he stalks with steps theatric. The signal giv'n

All bend their eyes on him ; no longer now
Pauſes the youth, but ſtorms in wild *Macbeth*.
Lo ! now apparent on his horrid front,
Sits grim diſtortion. Every feature's loſt,
Shrew'd horrible, inhumaniz'd. On ſtage
Of quack initerant I thus have ſeen
An Andrew wring the muſcles of his face,
Deforming nature, and extort the grin
And wonder of the many-headed crowd.
He ſpoke ; when ſtreight a loud applauding noiſe
Enſues, the clap of hands and thump of feet
Co-mingling, knuckles on the table's verge
With fury beating, and the thwack of ſticks
Junctive confirm the rattle of applauſe.
Lo ! now another of theatric mould,
Riſes in clouded majeſty, yclep'd
Rantwell; him and his inauſpicious fate
Deſtin'd to oil, and dreſs the flowing curl,
And with nice hand to weave the yielding hair ;
But each revolving, riſing, ſetting ſun,
Beheld this hero looking on his trade
With eyes indignant. His exalted ſoul
Launch'd 'yond the limits of his narrow ſphere,
Fraught with extended notions of the ſtage
His intellects, high tow'ring, flew to realms
Dramatic; there, the ſtorehouſe of his brain
He fill'd redundant. Here he tries his ſkill
Theatric, ere upon the graceful ſtage
With ſteps advent'rous he dares to tread.
In *Jaffier* now he breathes his ardent love,
With ſighs of mimic fondneſs. Now his breaſt
Heaves with the weight of jealouſy and rage
Perplexing ; all Othello wars within
His various tortur'd heart. Oh ! how his voice
Riſes and falls as Oyſterella's ſoft
And ſtrong, when every ſtreet and curving lane
Adjacent, echo the teſtaceous cry !
He ſpouted—and receiv'd his ſhare of praiſe.
Young *Capias* next his meteor lays down
Igniferous. Him had his parents ſent
To London, (ſeat of buſineſs) there the laws
Of Albion's ſtate to learn and exerciſe

Of playhouſe upper gallery, when ſome
Grand habited and merry pantomime,
So much delights the num'rous terrene gods.
Prologues and Epilogues now crown the ſport,
By various genii profuſely ſpoke,
By ſtamm'ring *Welchmen* here, and *Scotchmen* there.
To periodize the humours of the night,
Now far advanc'd, goes round the jovial ſong,
The laugh exciting catch, or wanton tale
Reiterated. Till the watchman calls
The hour of twelve, when ends th' amuſing ſcene.

PROLOGUE TO THE LONDON HERMIT.

DREAD cenſors! by whoſe nod we ſink or riſe!
Be merry, pray, to-night, and not too wiſe!
Our bard will ſmile at the ſtrict critic rule,
He had his learning in a laughing—ſchool.
Order, and ancient laws, he dares neglect;
And rather would be pleaſant, than correct;
Nay, ſpite of all grave claſſical communities,
Wou'd ſooner make you laugh than keep the unities.
Mirth is his aim——and critics! we implore you,
Relax, while our light ſcenes we lay before you!
Good-humour to the countenance adds graces,
Unbend the iron muſcles of your faces!
Lay acid wiſdom by; think mirth no ſin;
Throw your ſour dignity aſide,—and grin!
Yet tho' we laugh we wou'd not quit the grounds
Where ſportive nature marks her ample bounds:
Various her range! calm, gay, then in the vapours—
We catch the goddeſs while ſhe's cutting capers.
To prove that we have caught her in the act,
Our Hermitage is built upon *a fact*.
If, then, the drama's frolic pencil draws
A frolic fact—away with critic laws!
And grant the ſketcher's fancy your applauſe!
Oft has he drawn before—this ſhop is full
With touches from his hand; and none thought dull;
Should this, to-night, ſeem vapid to your eyes,
'Twould prove a *Diſ*-Agreeable Surprize—
Oh! think on his collection now in ſtore,
And ſmile on him, on whom you ſmil'd before!

PROLOGUE TO SPECULATION.

OUR bard and I were juſt about to fight,
When he conſented you ſhould ſet us right.
He ſays " he's nervous—nought can cool his fever,
" The town won't bear ſuch trivial ſcenes for ever.
" The times are chang'd—ſententious draughts they quaff,
" And all is nonſenſe now that makes them laugh.
" Morals from Seneca have gain'd the day,
" And poor Joe Miller's jeſts have died away.
" What then becomes of him, ſince Joe's no more?
" He never dealt in ſentimental lore,
" In modern novels tortur'd virtue's fame,
" Or " from the ſame" wrote letters " to the ſame."
" Would that he had!—fine words gain approbation;
" But if you laugh not——where's our Speculation?"
My anſwer was—" Sir Criticize may ſwear,
" You ought not to be pleas'd, when moſt you are.
" Say that's obſcure! he underſtands not, this——
" But pray—is that the author's fault or his?
" May call that pantomime in which a ſcene,
" Too much embelliſh'd by a chair or ſkreen——
" For ah! how oft when hackney'd logic tires,
" Would Ranger's ladder rouſe your latent fires?
" And one broad laugh rais'd by ſatyric Foote,
" Has done more good than noveliſt e'er wrote.
The comic muſe was born to laſh mankind,
Not by falſe ſentiment debauch the mind.
What villain trembles at grave Plato's name?
But Horace' ſatyr laughs him into ſhame!
Lecture the proud—will preaching make them humble?
No—but lampoon them and their pride will tumble!
All this I told our bard, but ſtill he ſigh'd,
Still urg'd his former doctrines, mine denied—
At length he ſaid that you ſhould ſettle all,
And by your ſentence, he muſt ſtand or fall!

PROLOGUE TO THE JEW.

OUR Comic Bard, before whoſe roving eye
Kingdoms and States in magic viſion lie,

But fruitleſs was this Spouter's parents care,
Tho' ſedulous: for ſcarce two years had roll'd,
Since proud Auguſta firſt had bleſt his eyes.
Ere the warm youth in theſe expreſſions broke:
" Am I, ye gods! eternally to ſcribe
" Inglorious?—No: ſome power upliſts my ſoul,
" Buoyant above the common herd of earth's
" Dull reptiles. Hence, ye wrong adjudg'd Reports,
" Ye dry collections hence! I leave you all
" To thoſe grave, ſolid thinking fools, whoſe ears
" Tautology beſt charms: Oh, Shakeſpeare! come,
" With all thy pupils! fire my glowing breaſt,
" Expand my genius, and enlarge my ſoul."
Kindled that inſtant at the raptur'd thought,
His loſty daring now aſſumes the part
Of tyrant *Richard*, and with awkward ſtrut
Affects majeſtic air: but wanting ſkill
Betrays himſelf unequal to the taſk.
Thy graceful periods ſo oft admir'd,
Divine inſpired Shakeſpeare! on his tongue
Imperfect die away; his labour'd ſpeech
Sounds gutt'ral like the hoarſely croaking race,
Upon the banks of ſome pellucid ſtream.
Scarce had he finiſh'd, when ſalutes his ear,
The mingled noiſe, upon the duſty floor
Reverberated. Down the Lawyer ſits,
Well pleas'd; and next ſtarts up *Hibernia's ſon*,
Like ſome enthuſiaſt on a tripod rais'd,
To catch each child of folly—now the cork
Intruded ſwift into the candle's blaze,
Is nigrified, and marks th' aſpiring youth
With whiſkers bold. Ferocity now darts
From either eye her broad unmeaning ſtare,
In *Bajazet* he raves, and low'ring, bids
Defiance: 'yond juſt nature's ample pow'r
He rants elaborate. His roaring voice
Calls echo forth reſplendent. He ended;
But the tribe with-held their banners of applauſe.
Then down he ſat with woeful aſpect dull,
But ſtraight emerging from a ſea of thought,
He ſwallow'd haſty the ſalubrious ſtream,
And re-inthron'd his abdicated ſoul.

THE PICTURE OF A SPOUTING CLUB.

Inflated with the ſwellings of conceit,
And newly fluſh'd with bold aſpiring hopes
Of excellence, up riſes *Leatheronzo*
Fam'd. In repairing worn out calcuments
None was his equal: No one better knew
The pointed awl to handle; yet his ſoul,
His noble ſoul with rage dramatic glow'd,
And thinks to arreſt attention: To extort
Th' involuntary laugh, to bid the ſmile
Sit dimpling on his cheek, the pearly drop
Sudden to ſtart from out the humid eye
Or to awake each Briton's juſt revenge
On Gallic perfidy. In mad-ſtruck *Lear*
The ſcene he opens. But lo; for want of crown,
Paus'd his mock majeſty. Around the place
Long time his eyes terrific roll'd. At length
" In a dark corner of the room he 'ſpied"
An empty urinal. Fir'd at the ſight,
He ſnatch'd the pewter prize, and to his head
Adapted it; well pleas'd. Now, now he raves
With adamantine lungs; his head he moves
Concuſſive, when a motion inopine
His action terminates. Upon the floor
Down falls the jordan. As it rolls along,
It ſounds, in jarring muſic, ring applauſe.
Lo! now ſprings forward with elaſtic ſtep
A ſon of comedy, *Soccado* call'd;
The tunic dazzling with its golden pride,
The buttonhole gay wrought with wond'rous art,
The well cut collar, and well fancy'd ſleeve,
Had oft his art proclaim'd; yet not to this
Was his great ſoul confin'd. Theatra now
(Dramatic goddeſs) whiſpers in his ear,
And bids him ſhine away in *Foppington*.
With joints inflexible, and head oblique,
An object ſtiff'ning to the ſight, he ſtands
In attitude unmeaning, and, the more
To render him ridiculous, he liſps,
And robs each word of its emphatic due.
He finiſh'd—when the wonted noiſe began
Loud as his all attentive ears could wiſh,
Nor leſs than that which ſhakes the circled ſeats

Sweeps o'er the map, and with a partial ſmile
Fixes at length on his beloved Iſle,
He views her deck'd in all her natural charms,
And wrapt in peace, amidſt the din of arms.
" Here, here," he cries, " on ALBION's foſtering breaſt,
" The Arts are ſhelter'd, and the Muſes reſt,
" Here I will build my ſtage, by moral rule
" And ſcenic meaſure here erect my ſchool;
" A ſchool for prejudice:—Oh! that my ſtroke
" Cou'd ſtrip that creeper from the Britiſh Oak!
" Twin'd round his generous ſhaft, the tangled weed
" Sheds on the undergrowth it's baneful ſeed,"
This ſaid, he bids us ſtrike the daring blow,
That lays his fame or this defiler low.
And now our PROLOGUE ſpeaks—In former days
Prologues were abſtracts of their ſeveral plays;
But now, like guilty men, who dread their doom,
We talk of every thing but what's to come.
As for our Fable, little I'll unfold;
For out of little much cannot be told.
'Tis but one ſpecies in the wide extent
Of prejudice, at which our ſhaft is ſent,
'Tis but this ſimple leſſon of the heart—
Judge not the man by his exterior part:
Virtue's ſtrong root in every ſoil will grow,
Rich ores lie buried under piles of ſnow.
If to your candour we appeal this night
For a poor Client, for a luckleſs Wight,
Whom Bard ne'er favour'd, whoſe ſad fate has been
Never to ſhare in one applauding ſcene,
In Souls like your's there ſhould be found a place
For every Victim of unjuſt diſgrace.

PROLOGUE TO THE DESERTED DAUGHTER.

FRUITFUL in good and ill, the teaming earth
To wheat and tares affords promiſcuous birth:
At once, from nature's womb, riſe woe and weal;
The ſprings that poiſon, and the ſtreams that heal.
Nay more, her offſpring each and all contain,
Within themſelves, both antidote and bane.

Each is a jarring world, where death yields life;
And concord rises out of endless strife.
Each seems distinct, yet all together bound:
And separate and collectively is found
A hoard of infinite; a countless mass
Of miracles within a blade of grass.
First of the tribe, and master of the whole,
Man stands erect; the sovereign and the soul.
In him all union and disunion shine:
He's now above half brute; now more than half divine.
Wayward in humour; infinite in wit;
The slave of all, to none will he submit;
In act an idiot; in conceit a sage;
Mov'd by a breath, he'll brave the tempest's rage;
Now soar a demi-god; now sink, a straw;
Now weep, a child; now give the planets law.
Railing at wretchedness, in folly wise,
Alive to all the bliss that he denies,
Worthy your laughter or perhaps your tears,
Brain-sick of errors past, to night appears
A moody mortal; sketch'd on this mad plan;
A surly misanthrope, and yet a man.
Within his orbit other beings move;
Some urg'd by av'rice, others spurr'd by love,
To aid or injure him, as passion drives;
The worst of servants; and the best of wives;
With many more, all waiting here within;
My task being ended, ready to begin.
Hear, and decide, like men who think and feel;
For from this night's decree, there's no appeal.

PARODY IN IMITATION OF MR. ROWE.

WERE you, ye gamesters, cautious whom ye trust,
Did you but know how seldom fortune's just,
So many silly dupes would not in vain
Of broken credit—and of fate complain:
Of all the various wretches play has made,
How few have been upon the square betray'd?
Convinc'd by reason we a slight detect,
Nor practise what we treat with disrespect,
Convinc'd that truth will honestly protect.

PROLOGUE TO THE BOX LOBBY CHALLENGE.

AS ſome fond father, who a bantling rears,
Feels nought but pleaſure in his tender years;
His tricks at ſchool, and all the pranks he plays,
E'en the boy's foibles then excite his praiſe.
A little ſpirit well becomes a youth;
Jack, though unlucky, always ſpeaks the truth.
But when arrived at a maturer age,
He launches Jackey upon life's great ſtage:
With joy elate, with anxious fears depreſt,
What hopes and horrors fill a parent's breaſt!
E'er yet he dares to caſt the dangerous die,
And ſhew his darling to the public eye,
The hopes of all his future joy he ſends,
To viſit ſome, *he knows* to be his friends:
Surly exclaims, eat up with gout and ſpleen,
The ſtripling's well enough, but much too lean:
He'll be ſhort liv'd, he has his mother's cough,
A galloping conſumption took her off.
Is this Sir Jacob's ſon? Old *Toothleſs* cries,
The boy is of a moſt alarming ſize:
Such o'ergrown monſters never can be ſtrong;
Don't tell his father, but he can't live long.
So when the bard at firſt prepares his play,
His heart beats high, and all his proſpects gay:
'Tis done, 'tis done, the enraptured poet cries,
The labour's over, I ſhall graſp the prize;
Snarler, upon whoſe word I can depend;
Snarler, ſhall ſee it, he's indeed a friend.
How do you like my piece?—good critic ſay?
Nay do not flatter; don't you like the play?
Why yes, Sir,—eh—the thing is well enough;
Is it not good? Humph, yes—what curſed ſtuff!
I think, my friend, the play houſe will be cramm'd!
I think ſo too—and think your play 'll be damn'd.
At length the night, the aweful night enſues,
Fatal to many an offſpring of the muſe;
The father bids his fancy's child appear,
And hopes to meet no friendly ſnarler here;
Moral his boy, if entertaining too,
His fortune's fairly made when judg'd by you.

PROLOGUE TO HOW TO GROW RICH.

WHILE jarring diſcord flies this happy land,
And Whig and Tory ſhake each other's hand,
Proud to diſplay the flag of Briton's pride,
And hoiſt The Union on their country's ſide:
That noble banner of our nation's fame
Unſtain'd by cruelty, unknown to ſhame!
Still may it ride triumphant o'er the wave
The ſignal both to conquer and to ſave!
While England's ſons in gallant bands advance.
To hurl juſt vengeance on perfidious France;
And adverſe parties zealouſly unite,
For freedom's cauſe, and freedom's King to fight:
Our Author, loyal, though not bred to arms,
Has for his own concerns, ſome ſlight alarms—
He ſhakes his head, and owns he ſometimes fears
The muſe of ſmiles may join the muſe of tears?
Together read the ſweet pathetic page,
And baniſh joke and laughter from the ſtage;
'Till comedy, quite ſentimental grown
Doffs her gilt robe, to wear the tragic gown.
Draws from the virgin's breaſt hyſteric ſighs,
And thinks to weep—is all the uſe of eyes!
Still may each rival muſe her pow'r maintain,—
With ſmiles Thalia beſt ſupports her reign:
To ſtart the tear and palpitate the heart
Juſtly demands her *Siſter's nobler art!*
Each has her charms, and while to nature true,
Each finds impartial advocates in you.
If theſe fair rivals, jealouſy forgot,
Should once embrace, and tie the friendly knot;
Mirth muſt retire and hide her dimpled face
Convuls'd with laughter, at the ſtrange embrace;
Our Bard diſcarded, muſt his jokes forego,
And Vapid's frolics, yield to Werter's woe!
The Author's proſpects bear a brighter hue,
Should his light ſcenes be now approv'd by you;
'Twas *You* who taught his earlieſt hopes to ſoar
Be ſtill his patrons, as you've been before!
Acquitted often by this gen'rous court
He dares, once more, rely on your ſupport.

PROLOGUE TO THE RAGE.

HOW narrow is the ſphere a modern Bays
Is doom'd to range, while he contrives his Plays;
Still urg'd by folly, Begins to explore,
Whom *he* and *you* ſo often ſaw before:
Precluded characters by *their* advance,
Whoſe minds could pierce thro' Nature with a glance,
And ſtill of Right poſſeſs the moral Stage
With leſſons ſtudied in a diſtant age:
In this, our glaſs, you yet reflected find
The levities which leſſen human kind:
The lighter follies which the town engage,
All that prevail in faſhion makes—the Rage;
Yes, all! though various be the motly forms,
That ſway by weak'ning, or compel in ſtorms:
That up to Fop evaporate the Lord;
Or down to Jockey ſink the Maid ador'd;
Confound diſtinctions, firm and frail perplex;
And make it difficult—to gueſs even ſex.
But is the Rage to levity confin'd?
Does no juſt paſſion ſway the general mind?
Lo! the rough Veteran, whom his Country's claim,
Rouſes to vindicate her injured name!
The *Rage* is *Conqueſt* which his boſom fires,
The foe yields! then—no! then his rage expires.
When in ſome dreadful conteſt on the wave
The gallant ſeaman finds a wat'ry grave,
E'er the laſt pulſe of ebbing life be o'er,
When the eye turns towards his native ſhore,
This thought may ev'n the parting pang aſſuage
That, there—*Humanity* is ſtill the *Rage*.
Our Author's Muſe follows with faſhion's gale,
Down a ſmooth river an amuſive ſail;
She dares no ſea where boiſterous paſſions ſway,
Or merely dips her wing, and haſtes away.
O may her airy toil your love engage,
And her new flight to pleaſe you be—*The Rage*.

PROLOGUES TO WIVES AS THEY WERE.

I COME not to announce a bashful maid
Who ne'er has try'd the drama's doubtful trade,
Who sees with flutt'ring hope the curtain rise,
And scans with timid glance your critic eyes;
My client is a more experienc'd dame,
Tho' not a Veteran, not unknown to Fame,
Who thinks your favours are an honest boast,
Yet fears to forfeit what she values most;
Who has, she trusts, some character to lose,
E'en tho' the woman did not aid the Muse;
Who courts with modest aim the public smile,
That stamp of merit, and that meed of toil.
At Athens once (our author has been told)
The Comic Muse, irregularly bold,
With living calumny profan'd her stage,
And forg'd the frailties of the faultless rage.
Such daring ribaldry you need not fear,
We have no Socrates to libel here.
Ours are the follies of an humbler flight,
Offspring of manners volatile and light;
Our gen'ral satire keeps more knaves in awe,
Our court of conscience comes in aid of law.
Here scourg'd by wit, and pilloried by sun,
Ten thousand coxcombs blush instead of *one*.
If scenes like these could make the guilty shrink,
Could teach unfeeling Folly how to think,
Check Affectation's voluble career,
And from cold Fashion force the struggling tear,
Our author would your loudest praise forego,
Content to feel within " what passes show."
" But since" (she says) " such hopes cannot be mine,
" Such bold pretensions I must needs resign,
" Tell these great judges of dramatic laws,
" Their reformation where my best applause;
" Yet if the heart my proud appeal withstands,
" I ask the humbler suffrage of their hands."

Finis.